

18.59 Geothermal Project on Mount Apo, Philippines

RECOGNIZING that:

- Mt Apo, the ancestral land and sacred ground of the Lumad people, is included in the United Nations List of National Parks and Protected Areas and is one of only two of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Heritage Sites in the Philippines;
- Mt Apo, a dormant volcano, at 2,954 metres is the highest mountain with the greatest rainfall in the Philippines; is home to numerous species, many of which are endemic to the country, including the almost extinct Philippine Eagle (*Pithecophagus jeffreyi*); supports the last major forest cover in south central Mindanao; and includes a complex series of watersheds important for the cities of Davao and Cotabato;
- the proposed Mt Apo Geothermal Project and current exploratory operations conducted by the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC) threaten to violate the ancestral rights of the Lumad people; to seriously degrade the Mt Apo ecosystem; to pollute the watershed of the cities of Cotabato and Davao and thousands of hectares of irrigated riceland; and to produce unacceptable levels of toxic steam, wastes and water discharges;
- road construction has already resulted in forest destruction by the access it has provided for landless peasants;

AWARE that the Department of Energy and Natural Resources criticized the Environmental Impact Study carried out by PNOC, stating pollution controls were lacking;

FURTHER AWARE that the project is contrary to Presidential Decrees 705, 1151 and 1586 and Executive Order 122-C and moreover that the Philippine Government Bureau of Forestry rules prohibit any commercial exploitation in national park areas and that the Department of Energy and Natural Resources has declared the proposed operations to be illegal;

The General Assembly of IUCN—The World Conservation Union, at its 18th Session in Perth, Australia, 28 November-5 December 1990:

URGES the Government of the Philippines to enforce the relevant legal instruments and take other appropriate, urgent, action to ensure the integrity of the Mt Apo National Park and ASEAN Heritage Site.

